

*June 7, 2004*

## IN MEMORIAM

### **\*\*\*A Man of Faith\*\*\***

Since his death on Saturday, Ronald Reagan's 1994 letter announcing his withdrawal from public life due to his affliction with Alzheimer's disease has been excerpted widely. His words and his dear wife's activism on the disease have been crucial elements of raising awareness and research dollars. However, the last paragraph of the following letter has not been given the attention I believe it deserves. It summarizes in a few brief words the essence of what made him one of the greatest leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: humility, faith in God, patriotism and hope.

"My Fellow Americans,

"I have recently been told that I am one of the millions of Americans who will be afflicted with Alzheimer's disease. Upon learning this news, Nancy and I had to decide whether as private citizens we would keep this a private matter or whether we would make this news known in a public way.

"In the past Nancy suffered from breast cancer and I had my cancer surgeries. We found through our open disclosures we were able to raise public awareness. We were happy that as a result many more people underwent testing. They were treated in early stages and able to return to normal, healthy lives.

"So now, we feel it is important to share it with you. In opening our hearts, we hope this might promote greater awareness of this condition. Perhaps it will encourage a clearer understanding of the individuals and families who are affected by it.

"At the moment I feel just fine. I intend to live the remainder of the years God gives me on this earth doing the things I have always done. I will continue to share life's journey with my beloved Nancy and my family. I plan to enjoy the great outdoors and stay in touch with my friends and supporters.

"Unfortunately, as Alzheimer's Disease progresses, the family often bears a heavy burden. I only wish there was some way I could spare Nancy from this painful experience. When the time comes I am confident that with your help she will face it with faith and courage.

"In closing let me thank you, the American people for giving me the great honor of allowing me to serve as your President. When the Lord calls me home, whenever that

may be, I will leave with the greatest love for this country of ours and eternal optimism for its future.”

### **\*\*\*Remembering Reagan\*\*\***

I have spent the last few days remembering Ronald Reagan. At one end of my life he signed my college diploma and at the other end my 1978 election to the State Assembly was part of the conservative movement that Reagan led to the Presidency. One of the reasons I am so honored and humbled to serve in public office is that it has afforded me the opportunity to meet people who make history. I had the privilege of introducing President Reagan at campaign events twice. I called Maureen Reagan a friend. I will never forget what this man of iron will did for America. It is why I am so taken with Steve Hayward's new book “The Age of Reagan” that I finished just last week.

I had the joy of meeting two of the people who I believe ended the Cold War and proved the emptiness of communism and the value of capitalism and faith in God: Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. I lack only John Paul II to complete my personal history of the 20th century.

I am so happy that Reagan is now with God and released from his pain.

## **AROUND THE STATE**

### **\*\*\* Proper Perspective\*\*\***

The California Political Review's William Saracino wrote a terrific piece this week pointing out some facts that you will not find in the everyday media you encounter. Consider these quotes:

- The fatality rate in May for American troops in Iraq was 50 percent less than it was in April.
- About the same number of Americans have been killed in 14 months in Iraq as were killed on the streets of Los Angeles in the 12 months of 2003.
- The current price of gasoline is less in real dollars (adjusted for inflation) than it was at the end of Jimmy Carter's nincompoop presidency.
- American oil refineries are running at 97 percent of capacity, meaning that even if OPEC were to increase the supply of oil, the United States lacks the means to process it.
- California, which consumes nearly 15 percent of America's gasoline, hasn't built a refinery in 34 years.
- The latest polls in Louisiana show that after a mega-dollar media buy for John Kerry, President Bush expanded his lead in that state from 11 to 19 percent.

- The latest polls in Ohio show that after a mega-dollar media buy for John Kerry, President Bush went from 6 points behind Kerry to 6 points ahead.

Saracino points out that you do not know these facts from reading your daily newspaper or watching network television news because of the liberal bias those in the news business. He writes about a study conducted by the Pew Research Center, saying that it “found that among national media outlet reporters, editors, producers, and executives, five times more, 34 percent, identify themselves as liberal than the piddling 7 percent who called themselves conservative. Fifty-four percent call themselves moderate. The major media has seized on that 54 percent as proof that no liberal bias exists in their workplace, ignoring the steep 5-to-1 liberal/conservative tilt.” To read more of Saracino’s insightful piece, see <http://www.cppf.us/OnlineOriginals/Columns/060304WS.html>

### **\*\*\*Serious Senior Accomplishment\*\*\***

My congratulations and commendation goes out this graduation week to the A.P. Government students in Jennifer Maiorca's classes at Kaiser High School in Fontana. After experiencing her students' cynicism with politics, Mrs. Maiorca challenged them to get involved and make a difference. Together they devised Project 535, an ambitious attempt to register one new voter in their city for each member of the U.S. Congress. In two weeks, these students exceeded their goal, registering 578 new voters. Though they experienced much rejection and many bad excuses in their efforts, they learned that young people can make a difference in their community. They have a newfound commitment to continuing that civic involvement as they move forward in their lives, and I appreciate their hands-on application. If you have examples of other students who are taking their civic duties seriously, please let me know.

### **\*\*\*Who Should We Believe on Jobs?\*\*\***

Last fall critics compared President Bush’s performance on job creation to that of Herbert Hoover. The numbers coming in since then are blowing that comparison out of the water, but the discussion has led many to more closely scrutinize the two ways that the Bureau of Labor Statistics counts jobs. The most widely used and referenced number is called the Establishment Survey. It is derived from payroll data that tracks 400,000 business establishments. The other is the Household Survey of 60,000 households.

The payroll survey tracks employment from the employers' perspective, which measures the number of workers in each industry, their hours and wages. The household survey looks at jobs from the workers' point of view, which tracks the employment rate for various demographic groups. Although the sample size is smaller in the household survey, it may be more accurate in the new economy. One difference is that it counts agricultural workers, and most important, self-employed workers. I think this is a very important segment of the economy to track, especially in a recovery when there are so many start-ups, which are not reflected in the payroll data. Not to mention the growing "E-Bay economy," plus the growth of other types of self-employment, like consulting.

In March, the political ramifications of these two methodologies was obviously important. The payroll method suggested that 59,000 jobs had been lost per month during Bush's presidency. The household survey, on the other hand, after being adjusted down for population growth, suggested the economy had gained an average of 6,000 a month during the same period. Both numbers have significantly improved since. But Dems have been busily panning the household survey because it has thus far made Bush look better.

### **\*\*\*Small Businesses are America's Economic Engine\*\*\***

New data from the U.S. Small Business Administration about the last recession shows the importance of small businesses in the new economy. 2001 was full of economic setbacks: the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks, the corporate financial scandals, the Gray-outs in California, etc. But outside the corporate world, new jobs were still being created -- nearly all by small businesses. According to the federal data, in 2001 of the 356,522 total new net jobs created in California, 315,861, or 87%, were created by firms with fewer than 500 employees and 40,661 by companies with more than 500 employees. This demonstrates the dynamism of the new economy and the importance of considering the welfare of small businesses when crafting public policy.

## **ISSUE FOCUS**

### **\*\*\*What Is the Yield on 12 Years of Public Education?\*\*\***

In 1999, the State Board of Education decided that the new California High School Exit Exam would include some Algebra concepts. Sen. Poochigian then wrote a law making Algebra I, or an equivalent course, a graduation requirement. The bill was signed into law in 2000. The state Department of Education notified California school districts of the new requirement, but gave them plenty of time to ramp up. Now, it is finally time for high school seniors to have successfully completed Algebra I to get their high school diploma. But an avalanche of whining from both students and teachers has led the State Board to grant waivers for more than 15,000 students statewide.

I would like to hear from LL readers whether they think young people, after spending twelve years in school, should or should not be expected to handle basic algebra concepts. Here are some sample problems from the exit exam:

If  $x = -7$ , then  $-x =$

- A. -7
- B.  $-1/7$
- C.  $1/7$
- D. 7

Assume  $y$  is an integer and solve for  $y$

$$Y+2 = 9$$

- A.  $\{-11, 7\}$
- B.  $\{-7, 7\}$
- C.  $\{-7, 11\}$
- D.  $\{-11, 11\}$

OK, these are two of the easiest questions to get you warmed up. Next week we will do some harder ones -- but thus far, are we having any trouble? More important: Would you be satisfied with your local high school if your 18 year-old received a diploma without knowing how to do the problems above?

## **BOE AND LEGISLATIVE DATES**

**June 14, 2004** --- Flag Day

**June 15, 2004** --- Budget bill must be passed by midnight

**June 15, 2004** --- Quarterly due date for estimated income taxes

**June 15-17, 2004** --- BoE meeting in Culver City

**June 19, 2004** --- Juneteenth Celebration of the historic time in 1865 that slaves in Texas received the word that President Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1863 making them free.

**June 24, 2004** --- Deadline for submission of legislative measures to November ballot.

**July 2, 2004** --- Legislature's summer recess begins, providing a budget bill has been enacted.

## **NOTABLE DATES/ HISTORY**

**June 7, 1864** --- Abraham Lincoln renominated for President by the Republican Party

**June 7, 1914** --- The first vessel passed through the locks of the Panama Canal

**June 7, 1775** --- The United Colonies changed their name to the United States

**June 8, 1995** --- U.S. Air Force Capt. Scott O'Grady was rescued by U.S. Marines, after having to survive alone for several days when his F-16 fighter was shot down over the Balkans.

**June 9, 1943** --- Congress passes "pay-as-you-go" income tax

**June 10, 1752** --- Ben Franklin's kite was struck by lightning

**June 10, 1776** --- The Continental Congress appointed a committee to write the Declaration of Independence

**June 11, 2001** --- Convicted Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh was executed at the federal penitentiary in Terre Haute, IN.

**June 12, 1776** --- Virginia adopted the Declaration of Rights

**June 12, 1963** --- Civil rights activist Medger Evers was shot and killed at his Jackson, MI home.

**June 13, 1798** --- Mission San Luis Rey de Francia founded in California

**June 13, 1966** --- The U.S. Supreme Court issued the historic Miranda decision requiring suspects to be advised of their rights during arrest.

## **GENERAL TAX INFORMATION**

For answers to your general tax questions, call the Board of Equalization information center. Customer service representatives are available to help you from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pacific time, Monday through Friday (except state holidays).

Toll-free number: 800-400-7115  
TDD service for the hearing impaired  
TDD phones: 800-735-2929  
Voice phones: 800-735-2922

To reach the Taxpayer Rights Advocate's office, call toll-free 1-888-324-2798.

## **HOW TO CONTACT ME**

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